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Wiki Assignment #1

Seminar in Applied Theory and Research

CBSE 7201T

Fall 2012

**Action Research:**

Action research is a harmonious collaboration of professionals attempting to find resolutions to everyday, real problems teacher s are experiencing in their classrooms. This method of research is looking for solutions to enhancing classroom instruction thereby increasing both student’s knowledge base and overall achievement. The use of action research as a substitute for the more mundane Theoretical Research projects allows for the researcher to engage in the concerns of educators that can be more directly affected by the resulting studies. Action Research is not a project solely dedicated to academic exploration, where a topic of interest is investigated by no other means except library research, it is not a study of what is wrong but is an examination of what is needed to improve a particular situation. Action Research in essence is the study of how we can do things on a more preferable basis.

**Defining the Problem:**

The concern I would like to address is the Pygmalion Effect in the classroom. The ground breaking research of work of Rosenthal and Jacobsen (1968), specifically defines what the Pygmalion effect is “that teacher expectations influence student performance. Positive expectations influence performance positively, and negative expectations influence performance negatively.”

“**When we expect certain behaviors of others, we are likely to act in ways that make the expected behavior more likely to occur**.” (Rosenthal and Babad, 1985)

As it pertains to teaching, constant complaints about students establish an environment of failure, but educators who applaud their students’ abilities create an environment of success. What kind of learning environment are you the current educators creating through your expectations?

Superior teachers can teach those that have been labeled as unreachable, if an educator knows that certain students can't learn that teacher should step aside and stop the forward progress of education.

**Is this topic researchable?**

When considering a topic from research attention should be paid to the availability of pertinent and scholarly information available. The Oak School experiment conducted by Rosenthal and Jacobsen in 1968, *Pygmalion in the Classroom: Teacher Expectation and Pupils' Intellectual Development*, was the first prominent research study done attempting to evaluate the correlation between teacher expectations and the performance of their students. Is the self-fulfilling prophecy embedded in teachers' expectations and transmittable upon their respective students? The Pygmalion Effect has been described and studied from both aspects of expectations. There are studies exploring both the negative expectations of teachers and resulting poor performance and the highly motivating expectations of teachers and there positive results on students. Besides research on the effects of Pygmalion there are also corresponding studies done in fields outside of education.

The Golem Effect as described by Babad, E. Y., Inbar, J., & Rosenthal, R. (1982) “Supervisors with negative expectations will produce behaviors that negatively impact the performance of their subordinates while the subordinates themselves produce negative behaviors. This mechanism is an example of a [self-fulfilling prophecy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self-fulfilling_prophecy): the idea that self-held beliefs can come true in reality. When both supervisor and subordinate notice the low performance, the negative expectations are confirmed and the belief is reinforced.”

The other study is the Hawthorne effect conducted in the Western Electric Company from 1927-1932. The study conducted by Elton Mayo was on the Individual behaviors which may be altered by the study itself, rather than the effects the study is researching.

**Prior Research:**

* 1. Rosenthal, R., & Jacobson, L. Pygmalion in the classroom. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968.

This research project concluded that expectations held by researchers for specific responses of their research subjects could come to serve as self-fulfilling prophecies. In addition, the results of the experiment demonstrate that teachers’ expectations could affect the actual intellectual performance of their pupils as reported.

1. Jussim,L.(1989). Teacher expectations: Self-fulfilling prophecies, perceptual biases, and accuracy. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol. 57(3), 469-480.

This is the abstract from the study explain the approach, Students' performance may confirm teachers' expectations because teacher expectations create self-fulfilling prophecies, create perceptual biases, or accurately predict, without influencing, student performance. Longitudinal data obtained from 27 teachers and 429 students in 6th-grade math classes assessed the extent of self-fulfilling prophecies, perceptual biases, and accuracy. Results revealed modest self-fulfilling-prophecy effects on student achievement and motivation, modest biasing effects on the grades teachers assigned students, and that teacher expectations predicted student performance more because they were accurate than because they caused student performance. Results provide more support for perspectives emphasizing limitations on expectancy effects than for perspectives emphasizing the power of expectancies to create social reality. They also provide more evidence of accuracy in social perception than of error and bias.

**Pros and Cons:**

The following three quotes best explains the pros and cons of the Pygmalion Effect as it pertains to the educational process.

“The expectations teachers have for their students and the assumptions they make about their potential have a tangible effect on student achievement. Research "clearly establishes that teacher expectations do play a significant role in determining how well and how much students learn" (Jerry Bamburg 1994).

“Students tend to internalize the beliefs teachers have about their ability. Generally, they "rise or fall to the level of expectation of their teachers.... When teachers believe in students, students believe in themselves. When those you respect think you can, you think you can"” (James Raffini 1993).

“Conversely, when students are viewed as lacking in ability or motivation and are not expected to make significant progress, they tend to adopt this perception of themselves. Regrettably, some students, particularly those from certain social, economic, or ethnic groups, discover that their teachers consider them "incapable of handling demanding work" (Peggy Gonder 1991).

**My Proposed Intervention:**

My intervention would deal primarily with workshops and one on one discussion with the teachers articulating the possible issues for Pygmalion effect or the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy dynamic:

1. There needs to be a better understanding of the impact of prejudice, bias and stereotyping in the current educational system
2. Using the capabilities of the students to increase their educational opportunities and subsequent success in the classroom.
3. Set goals for students that are both attainable and challenging.
4. Organize the classroom in a way that encourages open participation.
5. Communicate your expectations clearly too each student.
6. Be aware of stereotyping, labeling, and the biases of former educators the children may have encountered. Evaluate students according to reliable documents, records, and their achievement in your classroom, not based on the sayings of a former teacher.
7. Allow each student the opportunity to show his/her achievements and strengths in the class.
8. Feedback to students, should stress the progress the student has made since the last assessment.
9. Never compare them with other students in the class.
10. A different approach may be needed when going over a task or concept if a student does not understand.
11. As a teacher you must be aware of the three learning styles are visual, auditory, and kinesthetic
12. Provide students the opportunity to reflect on their responses. Avoid closing the door on students by providing them limited opportunity to respond to questions.
13. Teachers and administrators must sustain a high expectation for their students. To expect or allow students to do less is a breach of educational ethics.

**Construct and measuring intervention:**

The initial evaluation for whether there are reasons to suspect the Pygmalion Effect is active and influential in the classroom would be an initial survey of the teachers on what are their expectations for their class in the coming year. The student would be given a questioner after the second or third work of school to gauge their relationship with their teacher. I do not foresee many difficulties with the student survey the teacher survey could be an entirely different question. The construct In the context of survey research, is the underlying theme, or subject matter that one wishes to measure using survey questions. The construct for the evaluation of teacher influence on students will probably require a lengthy survey which will be take some time to assemble.

**References**

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